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OCI 6035
18 June 1952

DAILY KOREAN BULLETIN

I. Military Operations

Army

No major enemy action occurred during the period, although UN raiding parties and patrols met stiff resistance. In the western sector near Panmunjom, patrolling US Marines engaged in several fire-fights with stubborn Chinese defenders. A battalion-strength patrol from the 1st Commonwealth Division met heavy resistance in the Kigong area. Resistance was also encountered by patrols from the ROK 9th Division in the west central and the US 40th Division in the central sector.

Navy

UN naval air and surface craft on the east coast of North Korea attacked enemy supply routes and troop installations. Little activity occurred on the west coast.

Air

UN land-based aircraft flew only 629 sorties, of which 316 were combat. Medium bombers flew 14 sorties against transportation targets on the east coast, an industrial installation south of Pyongyang, and took part in a close support mission. During the night of 16 June, a B-29 over the Chongchon River encountered a probable enemy jet which made a firing pass. No damage was sustained.

II. Military Intelligence

Air

The Far East Air Force reports that the 30 daylight sorties flown by enemy MIG-15's during the week of 9 to 16 June was the lowest number for nearly a year. Contrasted with this, 37 night sorties by all type enemy aircraft represents a new high in the Communists' night interception effort. FEAF further notes that the pattern of enemy daylight activity clearly indicates that pilots were not sent out for training but for combat. The aggressiveness of MIG-15's encountered points to the presence of "well-trained and proficient combat pilots." FEAF still estimates, however, that the enemy will not expand his air defense operations southward or initiate air offensive operations at this time.

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III. General Situation

Political

Martial Law Commander Won in Pusan has advised Ambassador Muccio the "conspiracy case" trials will begin within a few days. The trials will not be public although the Embassy, 8th Army and UNCURK have been invited to have two representatives each present. Muccio comments that "there is danger Rhee may be trying to use us for his purposes by having us present."

An American visitor to Prime Minister Chang on 16 June was told that negotiations for the four-point compromise were off. The Prime Minister very excitedly stated that the President must be "out of his mind." Ambassador Muccio adds that, although the situation is not entirely clear, it appears that Rhee could have a compromise which would leave him in power if he were willing to make reasonable concessions to the Assembly's position. Muccio sees no indication, however, that Rhee is in a mood to make even minimum concessions. Rhee seems convinced that compromise is no longer necessary and that his intimidation campaign is sufficient to bring the Assembly around. (Other reports indicate Assembly officials do not believe the opposition will seriously consider compromise despite the pressure unless and until martial law is lifted and the Assemblymen released.)

Ambassador Muccio reported on 17 June that Shin Ik-hi, speaker of the National Assembly, confirmed the rumors that some opposition Assemblymen had gone over to Rhee's "Sam-U-Jang" group in the Assembly. In the case of one of these, Yi Hyop-u, Shin was told a few days ago by a Rhee supporter that Yi's brother, suspected of collaboration with the Communists, would be brought to trial and convicted if Yi did not yield.

Ambassador Muccio comments that "other Assemblymen who are not prepared for martyrdom may be expected to follow Yi's example." (Subsequent reports indicate that two Assemblymen who made statements, considered critical of Rhee, on the floor of the Assembly were promptly interrogated by the police.)

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